



DELIVERING FOR YOU AND A FAIRER SOCIETY



COUNCIL STRATEGY 2024 – 2028



INTRODUCTION

This report introduces Surrey Heath Borough Council's new Council Strategy for 2024-2028, titled "Delivering for you and a fairer society". It sets a clear direction for the future, reflecting the priorities of the new Council elected in 2023 with a focus on accountability, community and transparency, and draws on the wider aspirations and priorities of local residents and stakeholders.

We recognise the key community leadership role of the Council in helping to address the challenges and concerns impacting on the borough's residents and utilising the Council's democratic mandate to deliver the outcomes that are most important to local people.

In 2021/22, we undertook an extensive consultation, engaging with local residents, businesses, community organisations and stakeholders to listen to their priorities and aspirations for the borough. These continue to be reflected in this strategy whilst fully integrating the significant change agenda of the new Council.

This Council Strategy sits alongside the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, as foundations for the overall direction of the Council and the detailed Annual Plan each year, ensuring that our short-term actions are aligned with our long-term vision. It also plays a crucial role in focusing the resources of the Council and its partners, as it sets out the overarching goals that guide the council's efforts to deliver for local residents.

This is YOUR Council, so we hope within the new strategy you can clearly see YOUR priorities reflected, for the benefit of all in Surrey Heath. Please read on to hear more about YOUR borough and our plans for the future.



OUR VISION FOR 2030

Our vision is to secure improvements in the quality of life and opportunities for all of our residents and businesses, whilst ensuring sustainable council finances to deliver core services effectively.

We believe our residents and businesses deserve nothing less and that this is fundamental to building a fairer and more open society and a stronger and more resilient community.

Having listened to our residents, we will achieve our vision through the delivery of the following five priorities.



ABOUT SURREY HEATH BOROUGH

OUR ENVIRONMENT



Our residents put us in the **top 10 in England** for recycling rates

Large parts of the borough have special environmental designations

44% is green belt and 23% a special protection area



1st in England and Wales for tree coverage (36.1%)



4 Green Flag awards

for our parks and green spaces

OUR ECONOMY



7 Business Parks and Industrial Estates

Camberley voted **'Best Town for Business'** in 2022



£821 average gross weekly pay
South East average £685

37% increase in residents approaching Council with a housing need in 2022/23



Housing Affordability Ratio
Surrey Heath 12:1, England 8:1
(average house price to average earnings ratio)



Unemployment 3%
4.3% UK average

89% of businesses have **fewer than 10 employees**



9.6% residents live in **social rented sector housing**
South East average 13.6%

Health industry is top employer
(4,322 residents)



OUR COMMUNITIES



39% increase
in residents aged
90 years and over
2011 - 2021



**Surrey Heath ranked in the
Top 10 for overall health**
(Health Index Score 122.1)



6.5% of residents do not have
English as their main language
(Surrey average 6.9%)



16% of Surrey Heath's population
are from ethnic minority groups
(Up 5.2% from 2011)



Almost two thirds
(65%) of adults are
classified as having
excess weight



77.3% of residents confident in the
Policing of where they live.
(Residents surveyed as part of the Joint
Neighbourhood Survey, national average is 73.2%)



Life expectancy gap
between two areas of Camberley
is 11 years for women

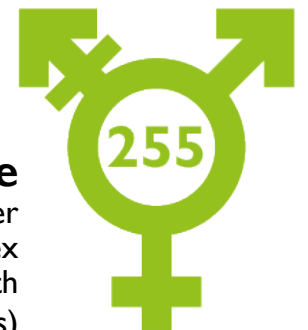


**Happiest Place
to live in Surrey**
(ONS data)



1520 people described
their sexual orientation as
Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual,
Pansexual, Asexual, or Queer
(2021 Census)

255 people
identified with a gender
different to their sex
registered at birth
(2021 Census)



PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

We are all custodians of our precious local environment and our planet. So we recognise that urgent action is needed, particularly due to climate change, to protect and sustain what we have, for both current and future generations.

We want Surrey Heath to be recognised for its exceptional green spaces and the high standards of its environmental practices.



- Drive to Net Zero
- Protect and Enhance our Natural Environment
- Maintain Clean Streets & Smart Open Spaces
- Increase Local Biodiversity
- Reduce Waste & Improve Recycling



PROMOTE HEALTHIER AND MORE INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

We believe in a community where everyone can be themselves, and be valued for who they are, with the opportunity to build a good life and achieve their full potential. Where it is easier to stay fit and healthy and to feel a strong sense of connection with your local neighbourhood.

A place that really cares for all its communities and goes the extra mile to support those in greatest need whatever their background.



- Facilitate a Flourishing Voluntary Sector
- Promote Health and Well-Being
- Support those in Greatest Need
- Provide Improved Access to Leisure
- Champion Greater Equity and Inclusion



SUPPORT A STRONG ECONOMY AND CREATE MORE HOMES

We recognise the essential role of local business in driving our economy and creating jobs. We want to be seen as a great place to invest, grow a business and build a career. We want to see our villages and other local centres buzzing with independent businesses.

We are passionate about the need for more regeneration and building more quality affordable and social housing for local people to ensure our young people and those delivering essential services in our community have somewhere to call home.



- Help Create More Homes to Meet Local Need
- Stimulate Regeneration of Camberley
- Support Vibrant Villages & Local Centres
- Attract Business & New Investments
- Create a Consensus Driven Local Plan



CAMPAIGN FOR RESIDENTS

We will give residents a greater voice in shaping the Council's activities and decision making. We will stand up for what is most important for local residents, proactively using our influence as a democratically elected Borough Council.

We will work in partnership with other organisations operating in Surrey Heath to strengthen accountability and help secure the best outcomes for everyone living and working in the borough, particularly in keeping it a safe place to live and work.



- Listen to and Engage Residents
- Champion Local Community Causes
- Promote Sustainable Travel Options
- Keep the Borough Safe & Secure
- Build Strong Local Partnerships



DELIVER EFFECTIVE SERVICES WITH SUSTAINABLE FINANCES

We know that the delivery of effective and responsive public services that are easy to access is what our residents expect and deserve, so we will accelerate our improvements.

We will be transparent in the way we operate ensuring diligent and strong governance in relation to the management of the Council's finances and property assets.

We will ensure we have the right people and systems to deliver high-quality services.



- Make the Council's Budget Sustainable
- Optimise use of Council Property Assets
- Develop a High-Performing Organisation
- Ensure Strong Governance Processes
- Make Services More Accessible



MORE INFORMATION

For further information about how the Council will be delivering better outcomes for local residents, please visit the [Council strategies webpage](#)

